

**Write-A-Book**  
**Literary Competition**  
**Guide**





## Guidelines for Secondary Book Categories (Grades 6 – 12)

<b>Picture Story Book</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Illustrations on each page</li> <li>➤ Limited or no text on each page</li> <li>➤ Minimum number of pages: 15</li> </ul>	<b>Illustrated Fiction</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Text with limited illustrations</li> <li>➤ Maximum number of illustrations: 5</li> <li>➤ Minimum number of pages: 20 (including illustrations)</li> </ul>	<b>Short Story</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 1500-2000 word text</li> <li>➤ Cover illustration only</li> </ul>
<b>Poetry</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Illustrations optional</li> <li>➤ Minimum number of pages: 15 (including illustrations)</li> </ul>	<b>Non-Fiction</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Text with limited illustrations and/or photographs</li> <li>➤ Minimum number of pages: 20 (including illustrations)</li> </ul>	<b>Graphic Fiction</b> (Comic Book Style) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Illustrations should be drawn in frames</li> <li>➤ Text in same frame as illustrations</li> <li>➤ Minimum number of pages: 15</li> </ul>
<b>Plays</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Text without illustrations</li> <li>➤ Minimum number of pages: 15</li> </ul>		

Minimum and maximum number of pages refers to the body of the book.

Entry Groups
Individual
Group (2-5 students)

For each of the categories listed, a school may submit four qualified individual and four qualified group for each grade level.



# Book Types for Students to Create

(examples by category)



## Fiction

Realistic  
Historical  
Romance  
Poetry  
Mystery  
Science Fiction  
Adventure  
Comedy  
Picture book  
Fantasy  
Horror/Suspense



## Nonfiction

Factual/Informational  
Biography/Autobiography  
How to  
History  
Science  
Nature  
Cookbook  
Personal Experience





# Planning and Writing a Good Story

*Beginning:* When and where does the story take place?  
Who are the characters?  
What is the main character's problem?

*Middle:* What is the conflict?  
What interesting things happen as the main character tries to solve the problem?

*Climax:* Does the problem get solved? This should be the most exciting part.

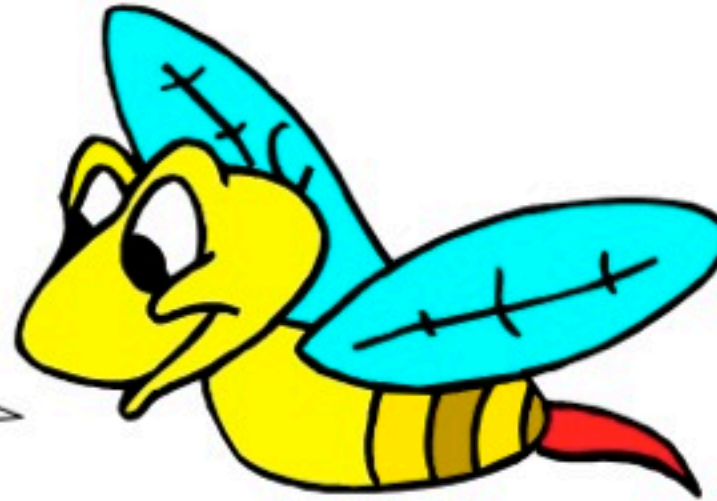
*End:* How are the problems resolved?  
Does your main character change in some way?





# Plot

Events that occur in the story are the **plot**. The story needs a beginning, a middle, and an end.



In the beginning of your story, we meet the main character and find out about the problem.

In the middle of the story, conflict is developed and builds to a climax. Your character has a number of adventures trying to solve the problem.

At the end of the story, the resolution of the conflict occurs. Your character solves the problems and has changed in some way



# Characters

A **character** is a person, animal, or thing in your story.



**Protagonists** are main characters. We need to know something about them, for example, their actions, words, thoughts, or physical description. The main character should be interesting.

**Antagonists** are the villains. We need to know about the antagonist also. A story does not always have this character.



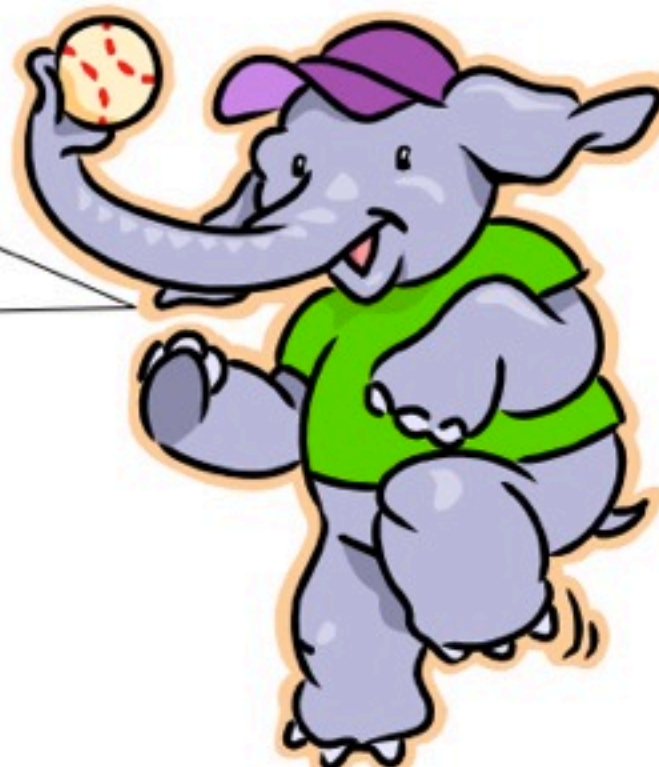
# Setting

Did the story happen yesterday?

Today?

or tomorrow?

A **setting** tells  
the reader  
where and  
when a story is  
taking place.





# Climax and Resolution

The **character** comes face to face with the problems and conquers them.

The **climax** comes when the protagonist finally wins out over the foe or solves the problems. The climax usually comes near the end of the story.

The story needs a **resolution** to bring it to a conclusion.

Be sure to tie up all loose ends in your story. Don't leave any characters or problems hanging.





# Illustrating

Illustrations add to the reader's enjoyment of the story.  
Imagine pictures to go with the words in your story.



Illustrations can show the appearance of the characters  
and settings.





Illustrations can indicate the mood and tone of the story.



Factors that contribute to mood and tone are color, style, layout, and the art medium.

## COLORS

Dark = gloom, sad, suspense  
Bright = cheerful, active, pleasing  
Soft = gentle, calm, relaxing

## STYLE

Realistic  
Abstract

## LAYOUT

One page  
Two page spread  
Picture on top/bottom

ART MEDIUM		
charcoal	ink	pencil
computer generated	oil paint	water color
crayon	pastels	wood prints



# Poetry

A poem has a different form. It describes things, tells a story, or makes you feel a certain way. It tells about something with fewer words that create a picture. It may have words that rhyme and a rhythm or pattern of beats similar to music. A poem may have parts called stanzas or it may form a special shape.

## Plan a Poem

Use the senses

How does it feel, taste, sound, smell or look?

Is it going into a book?

Will it rhyme?

Or keep time?

Does it have shape?

Enclosed in a cape?

Is the poem happy, sad, funny or weird?

Will it cause eyes to become teared?

Is there rhythm, what about a beat?

Time to repeat,

Plan a poem!





# Writing as a Process

## Prewriting:

- Form ideas about what you want to write.
- Make a list of these ideas.
- Ask others what they want to know about the ideas on your list.
- Think about what you want to say.

## Drafting:

- Choose your best idea to write about.
- Plan how you will write it.
- Write a first draft.
- Read your work to others and ask their thoughts.

## Revising:

- Read again.
- Think about what others said.
- Change words or ideas to better ones.
- Add or take out parts.
- Complete unfinished thoughts.

## Proofreading:

- Make sure all sentences are complete.
- Check spelling, capitalization, and punctuation.
- Make needed corrections.
- Have someone check your work.
- Neatly rewrite or type.

## Publishing:

- Give your story a title.
- Bind your book.

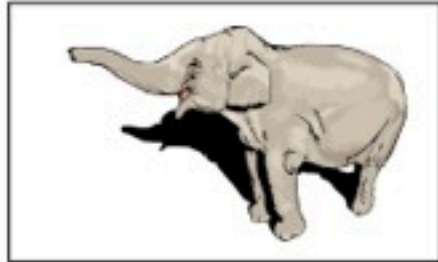


## Author Rules

1. Only books produced by students in Prince George's County Public Schools are eligible for entry in the competition.
2. Books must be written during the current school year.
3. Any book produced by a group will be judged in the division to which the student in the highest grade-level belongs. A group consists of no less than two and no more than five students.
4. All stories and illustrations must be the original work of the student.
5. Text must be legibly hand printed or typed on the computer and printed on computer paper (not lined/loose-leaf paper). Computer-assisted drawings must be original (no Clip Art permitted). If any drawing software is used, the name of the software must be included on the entry form.
6. If the text is typed, the font must be no smaller than 12 and no larger than 14, except for headings and titles.
7. Foreign language entries will be accepted with a clearly written and complete translation included each page or as part of an appendix.
8. Pages in each book should be numbered. Books should contain no more than 30 numbered pages, including illustrations/photographs. This does not include translation, bibliography, footnote pages, title page, fly sheet, author's biography, or appendices.
9. The size of the finished book may be no larger than 10" x 12" and no smaller than 5" x 8."
10. Students must securely bind books with hard-back covers that do not bend (examples: corrugated cardboard, foam board). No folders, photograph albums, rings or loose-leaf bindings will be accepted.
11. Photographs are permitted in the non-fiction category only. Any photograph or artwork that is scanned into a Write-A-Book entry must be available to judges upon request.
12. All books that do not follow all of the rules and guidelines of the competition will be returned to the schools without being judged.
13. The decision of the judges will be final.
14. All entries must be received on or before \_\_\_\_\_.



# Sample Layouts



The elephant charged.

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The elephant showered.

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The elephant juggled the balls.

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**Non-Fiction****Text—65 points**

Factual information presented in logical order	45 Points
Appropriate grammar, punctuation, spelling, vocabulary	10 Points
Footnotes/Bibliography	10 Points

or

**For autobiographies:**

Factual information presented in logical order	55 Points
Appropriate grammar, punctuation, spelling, vocabulary	10 Points

**Illustrations—25 points**

Originality and creativity	10 Points
Appropriateness to text	15 Points

**Overall Appearance—10 points**

Is it bound and neat?	10 Points
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**Short Story****Story—90 points**

Originality	10 Points
Well-defined plot or theme	30 Points
Well-sequenced ideas	10 Points
Character development	30 Points
Appropriate grammar, spelling, punctuation, vocabulary	10 Points

**Overall appearance—10 points**

Is it bound and neat?	10 Points
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**Graphic Fiction****Story—30 points**

Well-defined plot or theme	10 Points
Well-sequenced ideas	10 Points
Appropriate grammar, spelling, punctuation, vocabulary	10 Points

**Illustrations—60 points**

Originality and creativity	20 Points
Artistic composition	20 Points
Appropriateness to text	20 Points

**Overall appearance**

Is it bound and neat?	10 Points
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**Plays****Story—90 points**

Originality	20 Points
Well-defined plot or theme	30 Points
Well-sequenced ideas	10 Points
Character development	20 Points
Appropriate grammar, spelling, punctuation, vocabulary	10 Points

**Overall Appearance—10 points**

Is it bound and neat?	10 Points
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# Writing Terms

metaphor	A figure of speech that makes a comparison between two things that are basically different but have something in common.
non-fiction	Prose writing that is not based on imaginary people or happenings.
personification	Figurative language in which a concept, idea, object or animal is given human qualities.
persuade	To convince or refute by supporting a point of view.
plays	a common literary form, usually consisting chiefly of dialog between characters, and usually intended for performance rather than reading.
poetry	Type of writing which often has regularly repeating pattern of accents and rhymes.
pre-writing	Exploring ideas for writing.
proofreading	Correcting errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics.
protagonist	The main character in a story around which the action centers.
resolution	The point in a story or play when the chief dramatic complication is worked out; the conclusion.
revising	Adding, substituting, deleting, and rearranging selected elements to improve the substance of a piece of writing.
setting	The time and place of a story.
simile	A figure of speech in which two things are compared using the word "like" or "as."
sonnet	A poem that has 14 lines and a particular pattern of rhyme.
style	A way of writing that distinguishes one writer from another.
tone	A manner of expression showing attitude.



# Writing Terms

antagonist	The principal opponent of the main character.
appendix	Additional materials supplementing a piece of writing.
cinquain	A poem of five lines, with a pattern of 2-4-6-8-2 syllables.
climax	The decisive turning point of the action. It occurs when the protagonist wins out over the foe (antagonist) or solves the problem.
clip-art	A graphic-generated picture using computer software.
drafting	Transcribing facts, details, and ideas into a unified, coherent piece of writing.
epic	A long poem that tells a story, usually about the adventures and achievements of a hero.
express personal ideas	To communicate feelings and imagination.
fiction	Novels, short stories, and other prose-writing that tells of imaginary people and events.
figurative language	Language that displays the imaginative and poetic use of words. See simile, metaphor, personification, hyperbole.
graphic fiction	Story in a single binding that uses a comic book-like page layout with sequential boxes of drawing and text bubbles to represent speech.
graphic organizer	Visual representations of ideas that assist in organizing thoughts.
haiku	A very brief Japanese poem with three lines and only seventeen syllables.
hyperbole	A figure of speech which contains an exaggeration for emphasis.
inform	To convey messages using factual or personal data.
limerick	A kind of humorous verse with five lines and an "aabba" rhyme pattern.



# Book Binding Technique

Books may be side stitched, center stitched, side stapled or center stapled.

## Materials Needed:

Stiff cardboard (from pasteboard box, foam board, etc.) Edges should be neat.

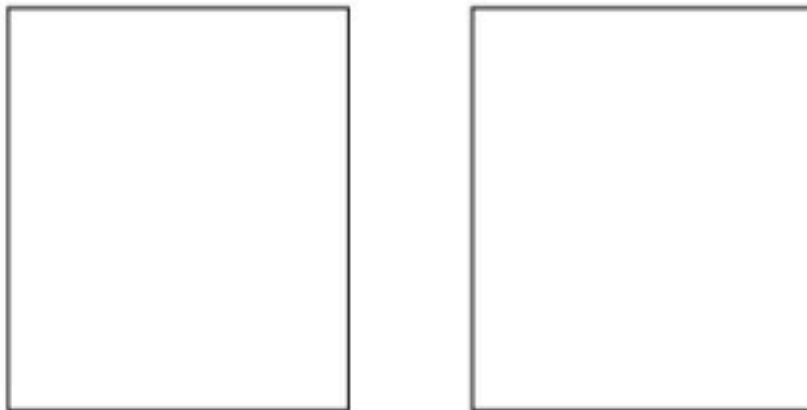
Material to cover it (construction paper, contact paper, wallpaper, fabric, etc.)

Glue, scissors, ruler

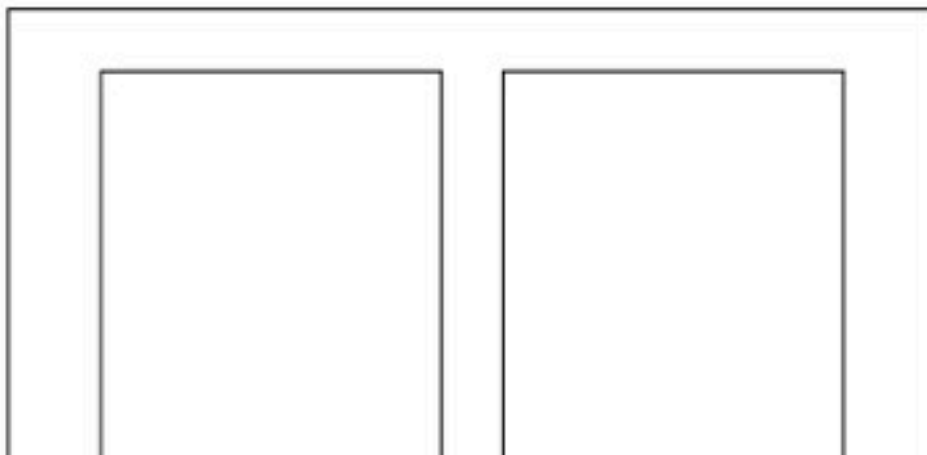
**Note:** The book should have a blank page at the beginning and end.

## Procedure:

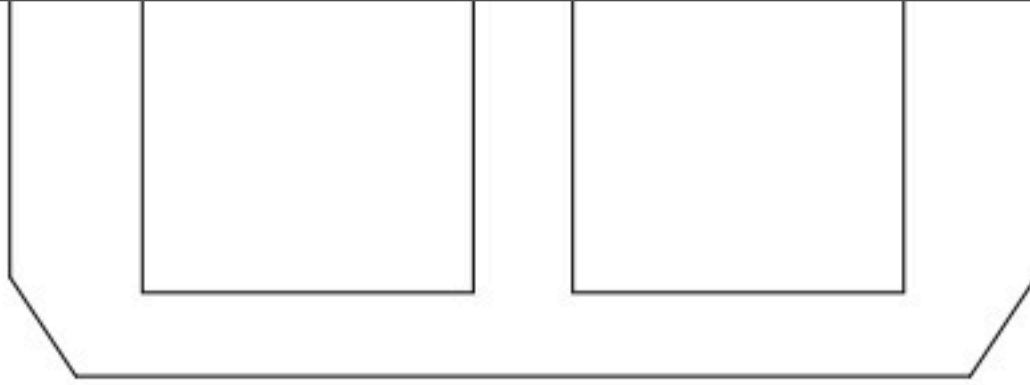
1. Cut two pieces of cardboard about  $\frac{1}{2}$  " larger than page size.



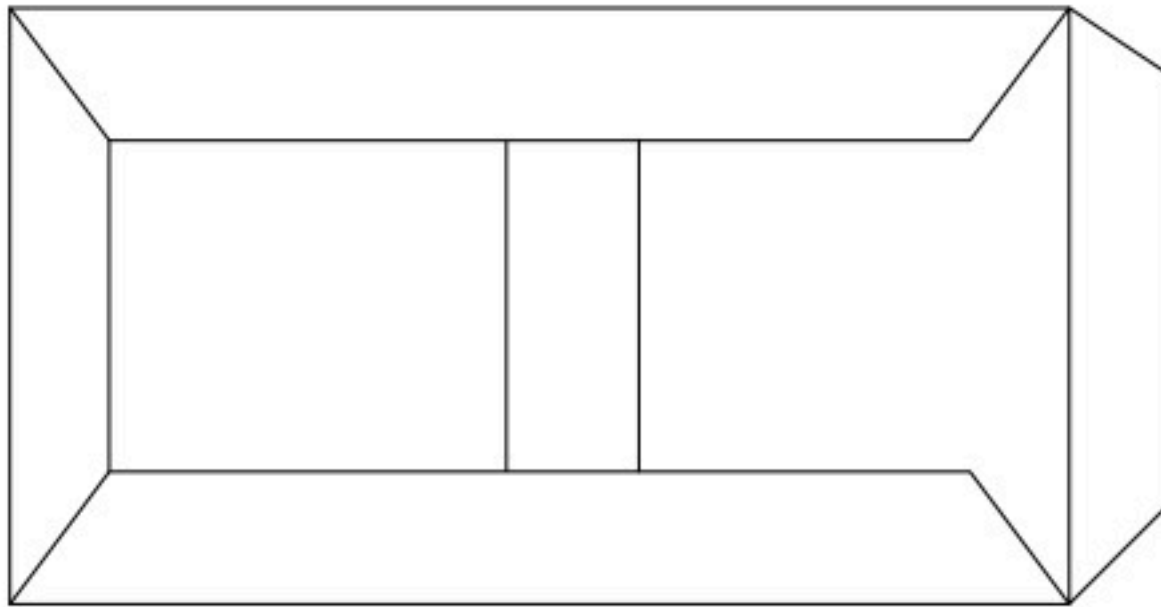
2. Cut one piece of cover material 1" larger than the 2 cardboards with space in the middle. The space in the middle should accommodate the thickness of the body of the book.



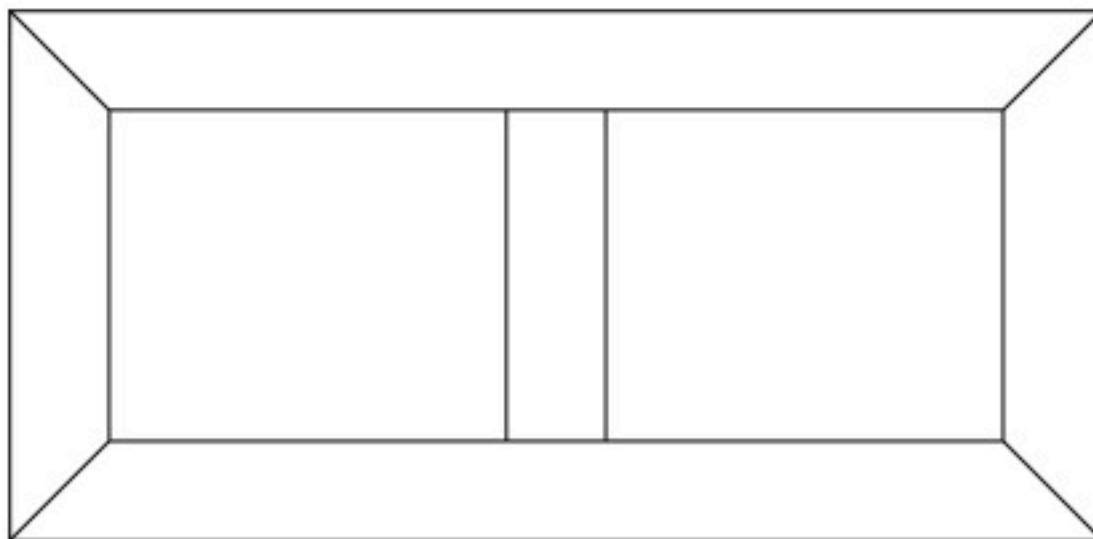




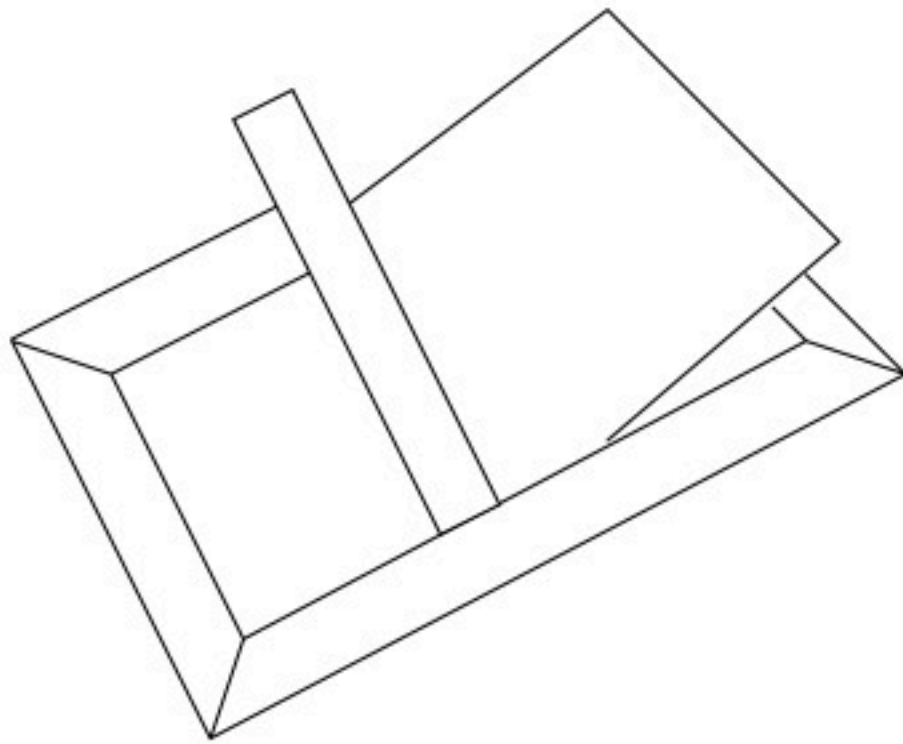
4. Fold the edges and glue them down.



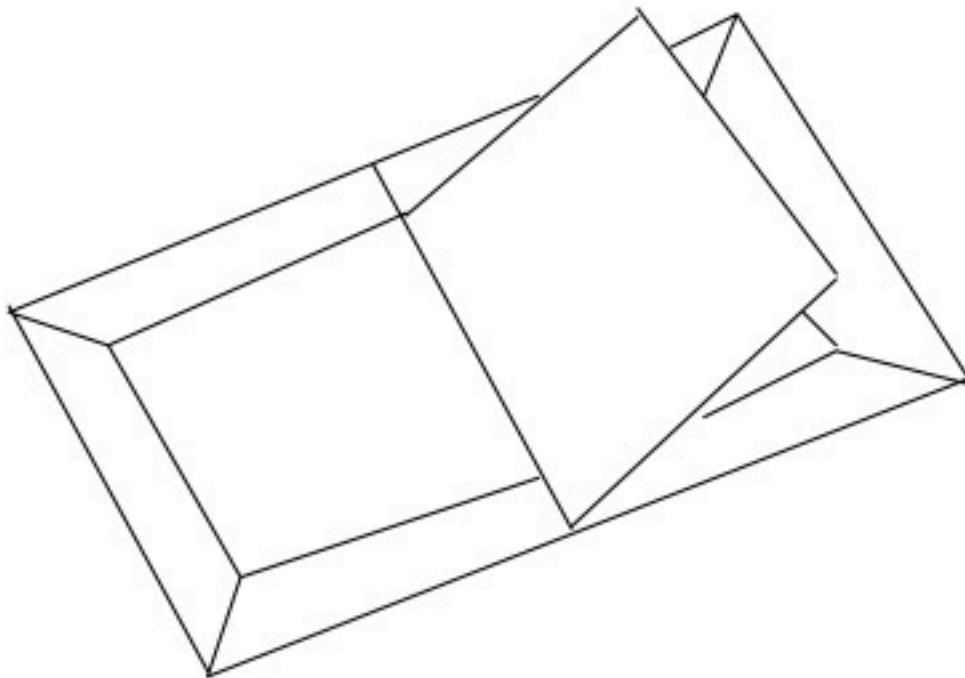
5. You now have a front and back cover attached.







7. Secure the back cover to the body of the book in the same manner.
8. Cover the inside of the cardboard cover with construction paper. Your bookbinding is complete.





## General Rules

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4. All stories and illustrations must be the original work of the student.
5. Text must be legibly hand printed or typed on the computer and printed on computer paper (not lined/loose-leaf paper). Computer-assisted drawings must be original (no Clip Art permitted). If any drawing software is used, the name of the software must be included on the entry form.
6. If the text is typed, the font must be no smaller than 12 and no larger than 14, except for headings and titles.
7. Foreign language entries will be accepted with a clearly written and complete translation included each page or as part of an appendix.
8. Pages in each book should be numbered. Books should contain no more than 30 numbered pages, including illustrations/photographs. This does not include translation, bibliography, footnote pages, title page, fly sheet, author's biography, or appendices.
9. The size of the finished book may be no larger than 10" x 12" and no smaller than 5" x 8."
10. Students must securely bind books with hard-back covers that do not bend (examples: corrugated cardboard, foam board). No folders, photograph albums, rings or loose-leaf bindings will be accepted.
11. Photographs are permitted in the non-fiction category only. Any photograph or artwork that is scanned into a Write-A-Book entry must be available to judges upon request.
12. Any books that do not follow all of the rules and guidelines of the competition will be returned to the schools without being judged.



# Judging Points

## Picture Story Book

### Story—35 points

Well-defined plot or theme	15 Points
Well-sequenced ideas	10 Points
Appropriate grammar, spelling, punctuation, vocabulary	10 Points

### Illustrations—55 points

Originality and creativity	20 Points
Artistic composition	20 Points
Appropriateness to text	15 Points

### Overall appearance--10

Creativity and neatness	10 Points
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## Poetry

### Poems—90 points

Originality	40 Points
Creativity	20 Points
Use of figurative language	20 Points
Appropriate grammar, spelling, punctuation, vocabulary	10 Points

### Overall appearance—10 points

Is it bound and neat?	10 Points
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## Illustrated Fiction

### Story—60 points

Originality	10 Points
Well-defined plot or theme	20 Points
Well-sequenced ideas	10 Points
Character development	10 Points
Appropriate grammar, spelling, punctuation, vocabulary	10 Points

### Illustrations—30 points

Originality and creativity	10 Points
Artistic composition	10 Points
Appropriateness to text	10 Points

### Overall appearance—10 points

Is it bound and neat?	10 Points
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## Write-A-Book

### Student Checklist: Picture Story Book

Student Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Book \_\_\_\_\_

Question	✓
Is there an illustration on each page?	
Are there at least 10 numbered pages, but not more than 30?	
Is there a well-defined plot or theme? (15 points)	
Is there a clear order to the ideas? (10 points)	
Does the story have appropriate grammar, spelling, and punctuation? (10 points)	
Are the illustrations creative and original? (40 points)	
Do the pictures match the story? (15 points)	
Does the book look neat? (10 points)	
Does the book have a hard cover?	
Is the book no larger than 10" x 12" and no smaller than 5" x 8"?	
Are the title and the author's name on the outside cover of the book?	
Is there a title page inside the book?	
Was the book written during this school year?	
Were the story and illustrations my/our own work?	



## Write-A-Book

### Student Checklist: Poetry

Student Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Book \_\_\_\_\_

Question	✓
Are there at least 15 numbered pages, but not more than 30?	
Are the poems original and creative? (60 points)	
Do the poems have figurative language? (20 points)	
Does the story have appropriate grammar, spelling, and punctuation? (10 points)	
Does the book have a neat appearance? (10 points)	
Does the book have a hard cover?	
Is the book no larger than 10" x 12" and no smaller than 5" x 8"?	
Are the title and the author's name on the outside cover of the book?	
Is there a title page inside the book?	
Was the book written during this school year?	
Were the story and illustrations my/our own work?	



# Write-A-Book

## Student Checklist: Graphic Fiction

Student Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Book \_\_\_\_\_

Question	✓
Are the illustrations drawn in frames on each page?	
Are there at least 15 numbered pages, but not more than 30?	
Is there a well-defined plot or theme? (10 points)	
Is there a clear order to the ideas? (10 points)	
Does the story have appropriate grammar, spelling, and punctuation? (10 points)	
Are the illustrations creative and original? (40 points)	
Do the pictures match the story? (20 points)	
Does the book look neat? (10 points)	
Does the book have a hard cover?	
Is the book no larger than 10" x 12" and no smaller than 5" x 8"?	
Are the title and the author's name on the outside cover of the book?	
Is there a title page inside the book?	
Was the book written during this school year?	
Were the story and illustrations my/our own work?	



## Write-A-Book

### Student Checklist: Plays

Student Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Book \_\_\_\_\_

Question	✓
Are there at least 15 numbered pages, but not more than 30?	
Is there an original, well-defined plot or theme? (50 points)	
Is there a clear order to the ideas? (10 points)	
Are the characters well-developed? (20 points)	
Does the story have appropriate grammar, spelling, and punctuation? (10 points)	
Does the book have a neat appearance? (10 points)	
Does the book have a hard cover?	
Is the book no larger than 10" x 12" and no smaller than 5" x 8"?	
Are the title and the author's name on the outside cover of the book?	
Is there a title page inside the book?	
Was the book written during this school year?	
Were the story and illustrations my/our own work?	



# Write-A-Book

## Student Checklist: Illustrated Fiction

Student Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Book \_\_\_\_\_

Question	✓
Are there five or fewer pictures?	
Are there at least 15 numbered pages, but not more than 30?	
Is the story original and does it have a well-defined plot or theme? (30 points)	
Is there a clear order to the ideas? (10 points)	
Are the characters well-developed? (10 points)	
Does the story have appropriate grammar, spelling, and punctuation? (10 points)	
Are the illustrations creative and original? (20 points)	
Do the pictures match the story? (10 points)	
Does the book look neat? (10 points)	
Does the book have a hard cover?	
Is the book no larger than 10" x 12" and no smaller than 5" x 8"?	
Are the title and the author's name on the outside cover of the book?	
Is there a title page inside the book?	
Was the book written during this school year?	
Were the story and illustrations my/our own work?	



## Write-A-Book

### Student Checklist: Short Story

Student Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Book \_\_\_\_\_

Question	✓
Is there an illustration on the cover only?	
Are there 1500-2000 words?	
Is there an original, well-defined plot or theme? (40 points)	
Is there a clear order to the ideas? (10 points)	
Are the characters well-developed? (30 points)	
Does the story have appropriate grammar, spelling, and punctuation? (10 points)	
Does the book look neat? (10 points)	
Does the book have a hard cover?	
Is the book no larger than 10" x 12" and no smaller than 5" x 8"?	
Are the title and the author's name on the outside cover of the book?	
Is there a title page inside the book?	
Was the book written during this school year?	
Were the story and illustrations my/our own work?	



## Write-A-Book

### Student Checklist: Non-Fiction

Student Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Book \_\_\_\_\_

Question	✓
Is there a minimum of 5 pictures and/or photographs?	
Are there at least 15 numbered pages, but not more than 30?	
Is the information factual and is it presented in a logical order? (45 points)	
Does the story have appropriate grammar, spelling, and punctuation? (10 points)	
If the book is not about you, does it have footnotes or a bibliography? (10 points)	
Are the illustrations creative and original? (10 points)	
Do the pictures match the story? (15 points)	
Does the book look neat? (10 points)	
Does the book have a hard cover?	
Is the book no larger than 10" x 12" and no smaller than 5" x 8"?	
Are the title and the author's name on the outside cover of the book?	
Is there a title page inside the book?	
Was the book written during this school year?	
Are the story and illustrations my/our own work?	



# Good Luck

- ✱ <http://www1.pgcps.org/librarymedia/index.aspx?id=824>
- ✱ Click here for the complete manual